

Aggies Hire NY Times ‘Diversity’ Advocate To Head Journalism Program

State law will soon ban DEI offices in universities, but state universities can still continue hiring DEI proponents.

2 min read

Valerie Muñoz | June 15, 2023



Texas A&M has hired former New York Times Senior Editor and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion proponent Kathleen McElroy to direct their journalism program.

McElroy previously served as Director of Journalism at the University of Texas at Austin and has focused on race and its intersection with journalism in her PhD program at UT Austin.

During her time there, she was part of the Council for Racial

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and Ethnic Equity and Diversity (CREED). According to their website, CREED advocates for equity-based hiring practices and distributes anti-racism “resources.”

In an op-ed McElroy wrote for *The Daily Texan*, UT Austin’s official newspaper, she advocated for diversity measures and keeping track of faculty demographics to make the university more welcoming to those who are not “cisgender straight White men.”

While she felt like UT Austin was inclusive, “every faculty member and staff member of color is an ad hoc Diversity, Equity and Inclusion officer at UT because our numbers are so small. I have been attending seminars and reading articles about attracting faculty of color because we all have to identify, hire and nurture faculty of color as we have done for privileged groups.”

McElroy has also spoken numerous times about her unique perspective towards objectivity and activism in journalism.

“We can’t just give people a set of facts anymore. I think we know that and we have to tell our students that. This is not about getting two sides of a story or 3 sides of a story, if one side is illegitimate. I think now you cannot cover education, you cannot cover criminal justice, you can’t cover all of these institutions without recognizing how all these institutions

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were built.” McElroy said in an NPR radio segment on the
role of journalists.

Texas A&M told *Texas Scorecard* that they are confident in
McElroy’s abilities.

Texas A&M kicks off its expanded journalism program in the fall. We hired Dr. Kathleen McElroy, who is a superb professor, veteran journalist and proven leader, as well as an Aggie. She has worked for newsrooms for 30 years, and has led journalism programs at two Tier 1 research institutions. Her track record of building a successful curriculum — coupled with her deep understanding of the media landscape — positions her uniquely to lead the new program.

Although the Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 17 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) to prohibit Texas universities from hiring employees to “perform the duties” of a DEI office, it will not take effect until January 2024. SB 17 is also supposed to block any promotion of policies, training, or activities “designed or implemented in reference to race, color, or ethnicity.”

The measure will prohibit universities from requiring ideological oath statements relating to race, equity, antiracism, and social justice, but universities may still hire

Texas A&M is governed by a board of regents appointed by Gov. Greg Abbott and confirmed by the Texas Senate.

This article has been updated since publication to include a statement from Texas A&M University.

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Valerie Muñoz is a native South Texan and student at Texas A&M University, where she studies journalism. She is passionate about delivering clear and comprehensive news to Texans.